

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 258006

FOR DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LUERS

FOLLOWING REPEAT MEXICO 9467 ACTION SECSTATE INFO DEA 28 OCT

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 9467

S/NM FOR AMBASSADOR VANCE

SER/INC FOR WAMPLER

DEA EOI FOR CUSACK

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR/MEX

SUBJECT: CODEL RANGEL: VISIT WITH MEXICAN ATTORNEY GENERAL

1. REP. CHARLES RANGEL, ACCOMPANIED BY MESSRS MADURO, MORENO, AND DUGSTAD, ARRIVED MEXICO CITY ON SCHEDULE, OCT 23 . REMAINDER THAT DAY SPENT IN CONSULTATION WITH EMBASSY PERSONNEL.

2. ON OCT 24, THE CONGRESSMAN HAD BREAKFAST AT THE RESIDENCE, HOSTED BY CHARGE BRANDIN. ON THE MEXICAN SIDE WERE ATTORNEY GENERAL PEDRO OJEDA PAULLADA, DEPUTY AG ROSALES MIRANDA, AND CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR, DR ALEJANDRO GERTZ MANERO. IN ADDITION

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TO THE FOUR WASHINGTON VISITORS, THE U.S. SIDE CONSISTED OF CHARGE

BRANDIN, DEA RD EYMAN, DRD HEATH, AND NARCOTICS COORDINATOR ALBERTI. THE CONVERSATION WAS DEVOTED TO A BROAD REVIEW OF THE NARCOTICS PROBLEM. REP RANGEL (CORDIALLY AND TACTFULLY) ASKED THE AG HOW IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT THE GOM WAS PUTTING FORTH SUCH GREAT EFFORT AND ACHIEVING VERY IMPRESSIVE DESTRUCTION STATISTICS AND YET THE IMPACT HAD APPARENTLY NOT YET BEEN FELT IN REDUCTION OF THE NARCOTICS REACHING THE U.S. THE AG REPLIED THAT THE USG REALLY HAD NO RELIABLE STATISTICS UPON WHICH TO ESTIMATE TOTAL IMPACT; FOR THAT MATTER, HE ASKED, HOW MUCH HEROIN HAD THE USG SEIZED DURING THE PAST YEAR? REP. RANGEL ASKED IF THERE WERE NOT A BETTER WAY TO DESTROY POPPIES, OTHER THAN WITH STICKS; HE SAID HE WAS THINKING SPECIFICALLY OF THE USE OF HERBICIDES. THE AG AGREED THAT HERBICIDES MIGHT BE MOST USEFUL, BUT POINTED OUT THE NEED TO PROCEED CAUTIOUSLY DUE TO THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL FACTORS INVOLVED. THE GOM WAS STILL EXPERIMENTING, HE SAID, AND THE DECISION TO MAKE EVEN A LIMITED USE OF HERBICIDES IN THE NEXT CAMPAIGN HAD NOT YET BEEN MADE. THE AG THEN BROUGHT UP THE RECENT "WHITE PAPER" ON DRUG ABUSE (AND WAS GIVEN A COPY) SAYING ONCE AGAIN (SEE REFTTEL) HOW CONCERNED HE WAS ABOUT POSSIBLE USG DECRIMINALIZATION OR LEGALIZATION OF MARIJUANA. REP. RANGEL REPLIED THAT HE FORESAW NO SUCH MOVE, BUT THAT GIVEN OUR LIMITED RESOURCES WE HAD TO ALLOCATE THEM MORE TOWARD OUR MOST PRESSING SOCIAL PROBLEM, I.E.? HEROIN ADDICTION. THE AG EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE CONGRESSMAN'S FRANK AND STRAIGHTFORWARD LINE OF QUESTIONING AND ASKED THAT THEY CONTINUE THEIR CONVERSATION LATER THAT EVENING AT HIS OFFICE.

3. FOLLOWING FURTHER CONSULTATION WITH CHARGE BRANDIN, A DEA BRIEFING AND A NARCOTICS COMMITTEE MEETING AT THE EMBASSY, REP RANGEL MET THE AG AGAIN AT 8:00 PM THE PARTICIPANTS WERE THE SAME AS FOR THE BREAKFAST, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF DEPUTY AG ROSALES MIRANDA AND THE CHARGE. THE CONVERSATION AS BEFORE WAS FRANK AND VERY CORDIAL, WITH THE CONGRESSMAN AGAIN EXPRESSING HIS ADMIRATION OF THE IMPRESSIVE GOM COMMITMENT TO THE ANTI-NARCOTICS PROGRAM AND HIS DESIRE TO BE HELPFUL IN ANY WAY POSSIBLE. THE AG'S REMARKS IN MANY CASES WERE A REPETITION OF POSITIONS FAMILIAR TO THE EMBASSY AND ALREADY REPORTED TO WASHINGTON. HE DID, HOWEVER, MAKE SEVERAL NOTEWORTHY POINTS:

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A. THE AG TWICE STATED THAT THE INTENSIFIED CAMPAIGN WOULD BEGIN ON NOV 15 (WE BELIEVE THESE GOOD INTENTIONS SHOULD BE VIEWED WITH SOME RESERVE, HOWEVER, AS THE AG DID NOT DEFINE EXACTLY WHAT HE EXPECTED TO HAVE HAPPEN ON THAT DATE).

B. IN AN APPARENT EFFORT TO DISABUSE US OF ANY NOTION THAT HE IS IN ANY SENSE A "LAME DUCK," (AND PERHAPS ALSO TO DEMONSTRATE HIS CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY FOR THE CND PRESIDENCY), AND AT

THE SAME TIME TO REASSURE THE USG THAT THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION (TO TAKE OFFICE DEC 1, 1976) WILL ALSO BE FIRMLY COMMITTED TO THE ANTI-NARCOTICS STRUGGLE, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL DESCRIBED HIS VERY CLOSE RELATIONS WITH PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE LOPEZ PORTILLO ("I WORKED WITH HIM FOR SIX YEARS"); HE ASSURED US THAT HE HAD ALREADY BRIEFED LOPEZ PORTILLO ON THE NARCOTICS PROBLEM AND HE KNEW THAT THE LOPEZ ADMINISTRATION WOULD CONTINUE THE COOPERATIVE NARCOTICS PROGRAM WITHOUT DIMINUTION. ALTHOUGH NOT MENTIONING HIS POLITICAL PROSPECTS EXPLICITLY, THE AG LEFT THE DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT HE EXPECTED TO HOLD AN IMPORTANT POST IN THE FORTHCOMING GOVERNMENT. (COMMENT: WE KNOW FROM PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS THAT THE AG STILL EXPECTS TO BE SECRETARY OF GOVERNMENT AND THAT HIS IMMEDIATE STAFF EXPECTS TO MOVE WITH HIM TO THAT SECRETARIAT.)

C. THE AG AGAIN NOTED THAT THE UPCOMING WOULD BE HIS LAST INTENSIFIED CAMPAIGN, AND THAT HE WAS DETERMINED TO MAKE IT HIS BEST ONE.

D. CONCERNING PROBLEMS HE HAS WITH THE U.S. PRESS, (IN ADDITION TO REPORTS OF "GO SOFT" USG MARIJUANA POLICY), THE AG CITED BAD PUBLICITY ABOUT SEIZED U.S. AIRCRAFT AND CONCERNING IMPRISONED AMERICANS. ON THE FORMER, THE AG SPENT SOME TIME EXPLAINING THE LEGAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED; THE BURDEN OF HIS REMARKS WAS THAT UNLESS AN AIRCRAFT CLEARLY HAD BEEN STOLEN, IT WOULD BE MOST EXPEDIENT FOR THE OWNER TO PRESENT HIS CLAIM BEFORE THE COMPETENT JUDGE, WHERE THE PROSPECTS OF THE AIRCRAFT BEING RETURNED IN A REASONABLE TIME WERE MUCH BETTER, RATHER THAN RESORT TO THE MORE CUMBERSOME AND PROBLEMATIC DIPLOMATIC PROCESS INVOLVING THE CONVENTION ON STOLEN VEHICLES. TIME RUNNING OUT, WE DID NOT GET INTO A LENGTHY DISCUSSION ON THE U.S. PRISONERS; THE AG SIMPLY REGISTERED HIS CONCERN THAT MEXICO WAS RATHER UNFAIRLY BEING

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GIVEN A BLACK EYE BY THE U.S. PRESS (AND SOME MEMBERS OF CONGRESS) ON THIS ISSUE. REP RANGEL EXPRESSED HIS FULL UNDERSTANDING AND SYMPATHY. THE TWO INTERLOCUTORS PARTED ON THE MOST AMICABLE OF TERMS, WITH EXPRESSED HOPES FOR A FUTURE MEETING. BRANDIN UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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